The
COMMONWEAL

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The Election

THE OUTCOME of the 1944 elections peculiarly emphasizes the importance of the two-party system as a stabilizing factor in American political life. Once again we are furnished proof for an old axiom: by far the larger part of the electorate votes consistently along party lines. But it is not this part of the electorate which determines the outcome; a candidate for the Presidency, if he is to be successful, must persuade not those who would vote for him anyhow but the marginal voters whose minds are not made up, often, until a few hours before they cast their ballots. Governor Dewey's primary tactical error was to base the greater part of his appeal to people who would have voted for him anyhow. His defeat by no means signifies a repudiation of the two-party system; the returns show how deeply ingrained in the American character this system really is. And for this we must be grateful, since it constitutes a real safeguard against the much-feared "tyranny of a majority." What his defeat really signifies is that if the Republican Party wants to win in 1948—and the difficulties which the Democrats will have to face during the next four years will certainly put their rivals in a good position to win—the Republicans must choose a candidate whose approach contains sufficient dynamism to win the minority which really determines the results—in 1944 a minority certainly not exceeding ten percent of the electorate. That one can draw such a moral is encouraging. It means that old-fashioned appeals to prejudice, however successful they may be locally, are no longer efficacious on the nation level.

Post-War Air

THE international conference in Chicago regarding what is to happen in civil aviation once hostilities have ceased is the first gathering of the sort to which the press has been freely admitted; the public has been able to observe its deliberations day by day rather than being presented with a minimum agreement at its conclusion. The conflicting interests of the principal participants, as well as their conflicting attitudes, have been clear from the outset. Certain broad measures are approved by everyone. There is universal agreement over the need of an international body to determine such technical questions as safety standards, quarantine arrangements, weather bulletins, etc. There is also general agreement that airports and bases should be open to the use of everyone on a non-discriminatory arrangement. But once this much has been said, you have said about all that you can without running into controversy.

The trump card held by the United States lies in the "going concern" nature of our producion facilities. We are in a position, from the point of view of equipment and personnel, to inaugurate world-wide air routes the moment armistices are signed. No other nation is in anything like an equivalent position. Hence our maximum proposal is based upon the idea of freedom of the air—largely because we alone would be free to enjoy this freedom.

The trump card of the British Commonwealth is its possession of bases which we would need to put into effect any world-wide system of air routes. Hence the proposals of the members of that Commonwealth are all based on a varying degree of international control or routes, rates, etc.

There is evidently a further cleavage—one of point of view. American aviation conceives that post-war air shipping, both of passengers and of goods, will command an immense market. In other words, we believe that there will be so much business that no nation need fear for its future in the air. The British, evidently, are less optimistic, and are greatly afraid of what they call "disorderly competition." To avoid the very real dangers which would result from such com-

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petition, they propose international cartelization; to reap the advantages of the vast opportunities we see lying ahead in the field of aviation, we propose international free enterprise.

There is a further political cleavage manifest at the conference between ourselves, with Great Britain tacitly on our side, and the smaller countries. These smaller countries are becoming increasingly impatient of the general pattern of post-war arrangements under which the big powers control everything and the small powers are permanently relegated to an inferior position. Thus the Latin American countries have formed a bloc, agreeable in general to the proposals of the United States, but violently objecting to our idea of an executive council on which we, the British Commonwealth and possibly Russia (if she is willing to play along) would be dominant.

Out of all these conflicts some compromise will eventually have to be worked out, unless post-war aviation is to breed future conflict. The most hopeful sign in such a compromise would be its acceding to the demands of the smaller nations, its setting up some sort of international body which would at least come close to the general principle of one vote for each participating nation rather than overwhelming control vested in the hands of the presently powerful.

A Word about Housing

AMONG the prospects for postwar American enterprise few seem to offer greater possibilities than housing. Before the war various factors had combined to hold back the construction of new dwelling both in private and public domains. In the latter case, despite genuine government effort, the accomplishment has fallen short of expectations. During the war great shifts of population to industrial centers—and the hasty provision of makeshift temporary dwellings—has combined with the stoppage of non-war dwelling construction to retard still further the provision of adequate national housing facilities.

One of the big questions at the moment is the disposition that is to be made of the dwelling units, for nearly two million people, which have sprung up in the vicinity of war production centers. In general the National Housing Authority is said to be in favor of pulling them down as soon as they are no longer needed. Yet it is held that many of these temporary dwellings are more fit for habitation than many of our city slums. In consequence a compromise is suggested: retain standing one dwelling unit of the temporary sort for every slum dwelling that is torn down. Possibly a good temporary formula.

It is here that the relationship between housing and the general economic situation of a community is clearly seen. How is it possible to do anything comprehensive about housing until it is known how much employment will be available in a given neighborhood? Or how can a community decide what to do with its temporary dwellings for war workers until the fate of the industrial facilities built up for war work has been determined?

There is one answer suggested by a recent series of articles by Boyden Sparkes in the *Saturday Evening Post*. That is the demountable, prefabricated house for the individual family. Apparently considerable strides in improving the product have been made in this field in the past two or three years, for several manufacturers are only awaiting the cessation of hostilities to manufacture and distribute such homes by the thousands. (These homes come completely equipped with refrigerator, plumbing, electrical fixtures and furnishings—in a word, all ready to "plant—and quite comparable in size and in cost with the American small home typical of most of our towns and villages. As the family grows, it is easy to add on to them. And if the breadwinner must move it is not too difficult to take his home along with him.)

There are decided advantages to such fluidity, to be sure. The mistake would be to attempt again to evade the question of stability of employment on the grounds that the American worker can always move on. The prospect for American home building, potentially a field for much solid new investment and employment, ultimately rests on the nation's success in providing sound economic opportunities in the other fields. Even low-cost public housing in our largest cities has to take neighborhood employment opportunities into account.

A Recipe for Small Business

DURING the course of the unlamented presidential campaign various candidates raised their voices on behalf of their small-business constituents. To such cavalierly hazy pleas for opportunity for little business a more specific remedy has been added. Maury Maverick, chairman of the Smaller War Plants Corporation, wants to exempt plants employing less than 100 men from the labor clearance requirements of the reconversion plan and claims that he has the support of the War Manpower Commission and the War Production Board. (This would apply on the Pacific Coast only to employers with less than 50 men.) It would mean that those smaller employers who can get the materials could begin producing civilian goods without having to obtain labor clearance from the War Manpower Commission. That would give one slight advantage to smaller companies in their competition with their more powerful rivals and it would provide one of the good first steps in the long conversion job that lies ahead.

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Cows, Bulls, Little Bulls

SOMETIMES it does not matter who says it or writes it or why it is said or why it is written; there is just a phrase and it is all wrong. Look at this one: "Countries like Switzerland, Portugal and Spain . . ." That phrase is the creation of Tass, the official Russian news agency.

In a place called Martigny in the valley of the Rhône in Switzerland every year there takes place what is called the combat of the cows. The biggest, bravest cows are paired; they lock horns and they push; it is a tug-of-war in reverse. The cows look as foolish as men do when they are called the Masked Monster or the Bearded Terror and they are still standing head against head in the ring pushing at each other trying to get a hold before they get down on the floor and twist each others' toes. But it is important for the cows to find out which is the strongest because the strongest cow receives from the men who milk it—for Swiss cheese—the biggest bell with the deepest tone to wear round its neck; from all the other cows trust and obedience. When the herd goes up to the pasture lands, above the pines and beneath the Alpine snows, the herd follows the bravest cow with the deep bell sounding in the mountain silence and you look down, and way down in the valley there is the castle on the hill at Sion and the Rhône flowing into Lake Leman and then flowing out of the lake at Geneva, flowing through the break in the mountains at Bellegarde, to Lyons and then at Valence it enters the South; the landscape changes; the Rhône flows through Provence to Martigues and the sea. It is important for the cows; they would make their own selection anyway; it is convenient to have them do it at Martigny where everyone can watch them without climbing a mountain—drinking white wine at wooden tables as at a fair and then there is dancing, the marksmen come and shoot at targets which keeps the Swiss Army always efficient; it is a festival. You Know Who has written about what happens in Spain with the males of the species and before him there was Goya; in Portugal the specialty was to fight bulls from horseback—the horse was very highly and expensively trained so that in Portugal it usually survived; according to You Know Who that also was sometimes the case in Spain when the "pics" still knew their job, but of course now they are very bad at their job and they just get bumped off their horses and the bull is still badly prepared when the "undefeated" comes out to take his punishment.

This is what happens to a reader when Tass writes a phrase that is all wrong. The reader does not get properly into Tass's argument because a country "like Switzerland, Portugal and Spain" would be a very curious dream country with the gypsies dancing in front of the "Wall of the Reformation," in front of Calvin, Knox and Luther; with Nicolas de Flue a hermit in the baroque palaces of Oporto counting the gold from the Indies; with Einsiedeln lonely above Granada. The Swiss cows, the Spanish bulls, the Portuguese—they are smaller—obviate such confusion.

From a poor start Tass gets off to a worse finish, for their sentence goes on to say that these countries are *like* because they are "countries which for many years have conducted a pro-Fascist policy hostile to the Soviet Union." (For your information—because it has nothing to do with this piece—Tass says that if these countries are this way Russia cannot possibly be seen with them at the Chicago conference on civil aviation.)

It would not be profitable to spend much effort arguing with the Tass agency about their sentence, or with the Russians. The Russians want something from Switzerland—Spain and Portugal are just in there for local color—and I do not know what they want; the Russians do not want to go to Chicago and I do not know why. That is not my problem, Mr. Anthony. Sometimes it does not matter who says a thing or why.

What matters is that the essence of this thing has been said sometimes in America by Americans. About Switzerland, I mean, and not crudely, not the pro-fascist business, and of course Americans do not know whether the Swiss Government has been anti-fascist or not; they do not greatly care. But these Americans have said that Switzerland has been neutral; that Switzerland has sold things to the Germans; they have said that there must not be any neutrals in the world; they have seen an innocent weapon in economic warfare called the Black List and they have thought that it was some sort of a moral and righteous condemnation of the Swiss nation. The Russians are engaged in habitual polemics coordinated with a definite purpose; Americans who say that Switzerland has not deserved well of the United Nations are talking without any purpose; they are slipping into totalitarian verbiage.

From this immense disorder of war, and of civil war, we are seeking a way back to order. It happens that, for us, the only way back to order is through war; it happens that the Swiss nation is at the very center of that order to which we aspire; it happens that the Swiss have paid the appropriate price to remain at the heart of a democratic order. They paid it when they mobilized; the Germans gave them their receipt when they dared not attack. They paid the price when they suppressed the Swiss communist party and when, at far greater peril, they suppressed the Swiss fascists at a time when fascism appeared to triumph. The Swiss have been brave and constant. No matter what anyone says.

C. G. PAULDING.

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I Never Thought of That

H. A. REINHOLD

I REMEMBER him well—tall, dark and handsome. A young ship's steward from Bavaria, always well dressed, always with plenty of money in the bank, always hard-working. I knew about his account because I had all the sailors' bank books in my desk, with a secret password arranged at the bank so that they could not make foolish withdrawals. When they reached the counter, the clerk would say: "Your account is locked; please call your chaplain to approve your withdrawal." Some of them would rush in, their faces flushed with anger, but I always managed to whittle down their withdrawal so that in a year or two they were glad to see a few thousands accumulated in their account on which to get married.

Paul did not need that. Of course he received generous tips in the Ritz restaurants of the S.S. *Hansa*. But so did others and yet they were hard pressed and in debt all year round. He had his annual vacation in winter during the slack season. He would go home first and wind up his holiday with two weeks of skiing in the Alps. He stayed at a good hotel. He traveled on good trains. He looked like a young, well-groomed business man, and when I saw him first in our seaman's club, he had just told old Countess Metternich—who represented the motherly touch in our place—that he wanted to quit seafaring in a few years and buy a good hotel in the Alps, with winter sports and mountain-climbing. Like so many Bavarians, Austrians and Swiss, he loved the mountains. They were in his blood and he actually looked mystically ecstatic when he talked in a sort of inarticulate way of his last climb to the top of Mount X.

He was strange in some ways. The girls he took out were chilled by his chivalrous good manners. I do not know whether he kissed them good night, but if that was the proper thing to do, I am sure that he did it properly and with the prescribed degrees of devotion.

One day he fainted in my office. With a resounding thump he struck his head on the floor. I do not know what brought it on, unless something had upset him in our conversation. When I wanted to call the doctor, he objected and said that this had happened before. I suspected then that he had pretended to faint because he wanted to escape from a tight spot in our conversation. I am not yet quite sure. I could never find out whether he was bright or not. But he was bright enough to avoid saying stupid things and he would never commit himself.

That is it. He never committed himself. All the while nazism and Hitler were looming in the background. Sailors, stewards, engineers and ships' officers crowded into my office looking for answers. They were bewildered. First they had seen a vigorous stand against "Brown Bolshevism." Then, after March, 1933, appeasement started. Everybody was loyal: the nazis were loyal, the Social Democrats were loyal, all the parties were loyal. The first quivers of persecution were felt among Christians while New Year's congratulations went back and forth between the heads of the nazi and anti-nazi parties. Everybody seemed to blow hot and cold. The seamen's club had an even temperature, and that was rather high as far as I can remember. The nazis thought so too, for they arrested me on July 8, 1934, and they deported me on April 30, 1935, a few days after a spy from the S. S. Guard had overheard a discussion in which I had told our seamen that the nazi government meant war sooner or later, with inevitable certainty, and that I was betting it would be sooner.

Paul went through all this when he was ashore, never batting an eye. He continued to come as before, although many of the other men became frightened and stayed away; I assumed that he was all right. I still thought so when his parents arrived in town to embark on one of Robert Ley's "strength-through-joy" steamers for a Party-sponsored cruise to Portugal or Madeira or Norway. I was distressed and I told him so. He did not seem to understand why I was upset, however, and I came to the conclusion that he was just like all the others: *panem et circenses*, and that he did not care what Mr. Ley's ulterior motives were so long as his parents enjoyed a holiday trip. He went to Mass and Communion in our chapel; therefore he was in good faith and I was, as everybody told me, simply an old anti-nazi zealot seeing ghosts and unable to forget the Weimar Republic.

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When the Gestapo saw to it that I had to live in Switzerland and no one dared even to correspond with me, I was one day quite taken aback when I received a beautiful picture post card of the Bavarian Alps from Paul, who was on a skiing expedition there. When you are an exile and completely taken up with the struggle between Christianity and the demonism of Hitler, it is highly upsetting to find someone going to ski in the Alps, riding on Hitler's trains, aiding Hitler to make the world think that everything is quite normal and well in Germany. I do not know whether I answered Paul or not, but if I did it must have been one of my brusque and caustic rejoinders. Paul did give me a neutral address—in New York. So he realized that corresponding with me was not healthy for seamen.

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How he ever found out that I had finally reached the place to which I had wanted to go all along I do not know, but one day he called me up in Queens. Could he see me in Manhattan? His ship was in. Why not—so long as it was not on his ship. Thus I saw Paul again, well dressed, well mannered, polite and tactfully concerned as ever. From then on he came to see me every trip, bringing confidential letters from my mother and gifts and messages—all through 1936 and 1937. On board ship he seemed to be unmolested. Being discreet, he obviously told no one about his meetings with the "focus of anti-nazi disaffection among seamen." In 1938 my mother told me in Paris that Paul always came in the dark of the evening, unannounced, armed with a bunch of flowers. We both felt rather sure.

One day something strange happened. He was quite nervous and fidgety as we talked in a restaurant in midtown New York. His ship was about to sail and I accompanied him around the corner of Forty-Second Street. His lapel blew back and there was a large, neat, shiny swastika on the reverse side. Not an ordinary one but a swastika with a spread eagle *à la* Roman Legion, the kind that only the higher-ups wear. I pretended to have seen nothing.

Then I received a letter from Saskatchewan. An Oblate Father sent me a warning, which had been notarized, to keep out of the harbor region of Manhattan. He could not disclose the source of his information. Then came a letter from Albany, written in the most terrible scrawl, the type they call in Germany "laundry bill scrawl." It came from a woman who had just returned from Germany. She had a message: please do not see any German seamen, however Catholic, and never go near the piers in New York. No address given. No source of information either. My lawyer said that an investigation by the F.B.I. might be so thorough that my informants from the old country might see their kind warnings explode in their own faces. We dropped the matter until I turned over the material to the authorities after Pearl Harbor.

I thought the story was over, but then I received a scribbled note from Paul saying that he had to see me. I met him in a safe place. Obviously he did not know what I had seen that windy day. But he had a story: he had always wanted to tell me . . . but he had been afraid that I would distrust him. . . . Well, he had had to join the Party in order to retain his job. He had even been promoted and he was now the Party's head of personnel in the steward's department of his ship. Now he had reached the crossroads: they wanted him to go to the famous "Donner Castle" in Altona—which meant a school for training an élite of nazi propagandists abroad: consuls, exchange students, seamen, business men, etc. In short, all those who come in contact with foreigners and who had enough brains and personality to help "the new Germany." So he *was* bright! and now he saw where his path—as the path of all Catholics in Germany—had led him. Should he go, or what should he do? With his savings in Germany in danger of falling into nazi hands, and with his family over there, he had decided to go on. . . . He would keep in touch with me to counterbalance the evil influence he would undergo and he would use his information for a good cause.

What was I to think of it? Was this a clever scheme to allay my suspicions and condition me for further shocks, or was he sincere? Was the whole thing, including his little frauds, part of a well-thought-out plan? That sounded too preposterous, and I had been accused of a "refugee complex" too often to make up my mind.

A year later Paul jumped ship. He lived underground. He escaped to South America with a pass furnished by the nazi consul in the presence of a representative of the American authorities. He said he was surprised. He soon became prosperous. He even built up a bank account in this country, but suddenly withdrew it in 1940.

While I never discovered that he had done or said anything against the countries in which he was staying, I could never rid myself of a strange feeling. I knew that he had been investigated and under surveillance since Pearl Harbor. He went about free and unmolested. He must have been straight and loyal despite his strange record. I knew that he told me after his desertion from the nazi ship that he had smuggled part of his large savings out of Germany. He actually told me that he had planned all this for years and had played along with the nazis until they caught on. He said that the Gestapo had actually called him to headquarters and asked unpleasant questions about his activities in New York—it was then that he skipped. It sounded plausible enough. . . . But there have been refugees planted by the nazis, and he was the sort of person you could never quite make out.

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And then something happened which it had never occured to me to imagine. I received an air-mail letter from him, and from his superior, to the effect that he had joined an order, leaving behind all his possessions, his house, a good job. He had joined the order as a lay brother. In that order the lay brothers do the menial work, they dress like scarecrows; in general, they have the most humble status. His superior now wrote that "Hermano Pablo" had sought admission for the express and unique purpose of serving the lepers, and that he had done so after months of persistent deliberation and struggle. His own letter said

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that he despairs of mankind so long as "we are on the wrong side"—I quote literally. Who does he mean by "we"? Which is the wrong side? Is it mere worldliness, trust in material victory alone, or does he mean the United Nations? Thus even in a decision which is apparently most clear cut this enigmatic seafarer is true to form: enigmatic.

But one thing makes me wonder. It had never occurred to me as a possibility, either. I am too old to believe in it. What if the most ardent fanatical nazis, the most ruthless, double-dealing and clever agents of this mass hysteria, all came to a Damascus one day? What if they conquered, as those who uphold the righteous cause, by doing a penance commensurate with their crimes? To leave all that you possess, to place yourself without reservations under a superior, to choose an unglamorous and lowly position, and to take off your well-fed and well-clothed ego in order to minister to lepers for the rest of your life—that cannot possibly be a new trick. It may be the result of utter despair and frustration. Freud may have a clever name for it. But I am beginning to wonder what Christ meant when He said that He came to help the sinners and the lost sheep.

Of course some muddle-headed person is sure to say: "Look how these poor, misled people are and how bad Vansittart, Sumner Welles and Gurian are. Let us be kind." May I say that this has nothing to do with those questions? A safe peace, the wiping out of the nazi system, a true victory are needed. Then, if we find a country ready to make amends and to admit the error of its ways, we shall see what we can do—but it needs the minding of the lepers to convince me that there is not another trap ahead. I have thought of that!

His Ancestral Calling

GABRIEL DAVIDSON

IN THE spring of 1939 a young couple came to my office. "We have just come back from New Jersey, from the farm of my brother-in-law," said the husband. "We are seriously thinking of becoming farmers." I asked, "What do you know about farming?" "Not a thing. My wife and I are natives of New York City and we have lived here all our lives. I am a printer, have saved up a couple of thousand dollars, but am getting tired of the printing trade. My wife and I have had the idea of a farm in our minds for a long time, but we were always afraid to make the actual move. When we saw what my brother-in-law, also a city man, did in less than two years and how nicely his family lives, our minds were made up. So we came here. We need your help." The interview continued for some minutes. Satisfied that the man was physically and temperamentally fit, I assigned a settlement specialist to work on the case.

The husband's capital was modest and therefore nothing elaborate was possible. But finally a farm with possibilities was located which he was able to buy through the extension of a mortgage loan. Farm management plans were mapped out and, after the family had moved, an agricultural specialist from my staff visited the farm from time to time. On the last visit, a couple of months ago, we found that this former city dweller who had never raised a blade of grass had, in a short five years, developed a farm plant with hothouses where he was raising tomatoes, green peppers, egg plant, cabbages, lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, and a large variety of flowers; that he had increased his poultry flock, installed an incubator, built a roadside stand; and that his estimated income for the year from vegetables, flowers and poultry would reach at least $5,500.

Why recount this case? Does it sound so out of the ordinary for a city man to turn to farming? Not to one who has seen thousands of them pass through his office, as I have. But it may sound strange to many readers when I explain that this family was Jewish, and that the services rendered him came from a Jewish organization—the Jewish Agricultural Society, founded for the very purpose of guiding the Jew back to his ancestral calling.

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Unfortunately, altogether too many people, Jews not excepted, believe that the Jew has neither desire nor aptitude for farming, that he is by choice and by inclination an out-and-out city man. Where such a notion is held by well meaning but uninformed persons not much harm results, but when it is broadcast by divisive forces to raise walls of misunderstanding, it becomes a danger. That is why it is in the interest of better understanding to call attention to the many Jews who are tilling and toiling, deriving their sustenance from America's fertile acres.

Not only are there Jewish farmers, but there have been Jewish farmers in the United States since the very beginning. Jewish farmers in considerable numbers are today straining their energies to plow, to plant, to produce while their sons and daughters serve the flag on all the battle fronts and on all the seven seas.

No census has ever been taken, but it is estimated that upward of a hundred thousand Jews in the United States derive their living in whole or in part from farming. They are to be found in practically every state, with the largest numbers in the Northeast and Middle West, the areas where the Jewish population is densest. Their farms range in size from less than an acre, de-

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voted to greenhouse crops, up to ten or twenty acre poultry farms, to one hundred or one hundred and fifty acre dairy farms, to large fruit farms, to grain ranches and stock ranches, some (not many) running into thousands of acres. The big majority of Jewish farmsteads can be classified as of the "family type," that is, farms which can be operated by the farmer and his family with a minimum of hired help, and where products are raised both for home consumption and for the market.

In the face of the growing increase in farm tenancy, so much deplored by agricultural economists and rural sociologists, it is a striking fact that among Jews farm tenancy is almost nonexistent. Might that not be because, so long deprived of the right of possessing land, the Jew values ownership so strongly that he is willing to assume all sorts of burdens, if they be necessary for him to acquire for himself a piece of earth, small though it may be, that he can call his very own.

The Jewish farmer is essentially a middle class man, rugged, industrious, enterprising, drawn to the farm not to accumulate wealth but because the farm way of life appeals to him. He takes an active interest not only in specifically Jewish affairs but also in matters touching the welfare of the larger community of which he is a part. He may be a member of the local school board, a justice of the peace, a town supervisor, a deputy sheriff, holder of other public office. He is an ardent cooperator and has played leading rôles in the building of farm cooperatives of varied types. Though largely of foreign birth, over ninety percent of Jewish farmers are American citizens, and almost one hundred percent of refugees, not already citizens, are declarants.

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Consider the Jewish farmer's background. He did not inherit his farm from father or grandfather. He did not bring with him a farm tradition extending generations back. His forebears, intermittently over a period of almost two thousand years, were wanderers, driven from pillar to post. Even in those lands where Jews did find asylum their choice of occupation was restricted. They became petty traders, peddlers, small shopkeepers, middlemen not by choice but because other occupations were closed to them. When large numbers of Jews entered the United States during the peaks of Jewish immigration, they arrived with little more than the clothes on their backs. They could not be finicky in choosing an occupation. They had to live. Products of two thousand years of sad history and of sad experience, urbanized as no people before them had been urbanized, without means, they could not be expected to go into farming immediately. It takes time to change habits and more so if deeply ingrained. The present Jewish farm movement is less than fifty years old, but it must be noted that the thousands of Jewish families who wended their way to the farm did so during the very period when the general drift was in the opposite direction. The number of Jews in farming is still not large, not nearly as large as it should be, but, when one considers all that is involved in this transmutation, the wonder is not that the Jewish farm population is small but that it was able to reach its present dimension in so short a time.

There is no intention here to exalt the abilities of Jewish farmers. By and large Jewish farmers are no better and no worse than other farmers. There are shining successes and there are dismal failures. The great majority are just average. But it is only fair to point out that there is hardly any branch of farming in which some Jews have not attained top rank. A leading vegetable grower on Long Island, the winner of numerous medals and awards, honored for advancing the agricultural interests of his community, rose from the sidewalks of the New York East Side. A poultryman in Ulster County, New York, is one of the leading breeders of white leghorns in the country. Similarly, a Jewish poultryman in New Haven County, Connecticut, won more than national reputation as the breeder of high quality chicks. A Jewish farmer in Aroostook County, Maine, raises the largest acreage of certified seed potatoes. Fields in President Roosevelt's farm have been planted with alfalfa from seed supplied by a Jewish farmer in South Dakota. A humble Jewish farm laborer became one of New Jersey's outstanding dairymen. The son of a Jewish dairyman, starting from scratch, developed into one of Rockland County's finest fruit farmers. He is one of the most progressive fruit growers in New York State. An immigrant Jew runs a farm in Maryland devoted to the production of animals for laboratory purposes. His reputation for integrity and the high quality of his stock have won him the patronage of leading universities and pharmaceutical firms. A Jewish rancher in Idaho received recognition for the excellence of his cattle from a leading meat packing firm. A Russian Jewish immigrant starting at the bottom is now the owner of an 8,000 acre farm in Mercer County, California, on which immense quantities of flax, cotton and barley are produced. His advanced methods hold forth promise of benefit to many other farmers in his region.

In the field of agricultural science the works of Jacob Joseph Taubenhaus, Chief Plant Pathologist at Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, of Meyer Edward Jaffa at the University of California and of Moses M. Levine at Kansas State Agricultural College and the University of Minnesota, were of distinct value to the cotton, citrus

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and wheat growers of the United States. A volume can be written about the contributions to soil science by Jacob G. Lipman, the late Dean of Rutgers Agricultural College and Director of the New Jersey Experiment Station. Lipman's original researches and those which he stimulated did much for the conservation of our soil resources, made possible the reclamation of waste lands and the better utilization of soil of poor fertility. Thanks in large measure to Lipman's pioneering investigations and to those of his disciples, America has been able to achieve its miraculous level of food production.

★

For the Jew the modern movement farmward is not a new adventure. It is a return to his ancestral calling. The ancient Israelites had an abiding attachment to the land. They glorified it as a land flowing with milk and honey. They were bidden to love it and to nurture it. To conserve the soil, every seventh year was set apart by divine command as the Sabbath year, "a year of rest for the land." This yearning for the soil, stifled for centuries, this reverence for the earth, made possible achievements in Palestine regarded by such an authority as Walter C. Lowdermilk, Chief of the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, as bordering on the miraculous. There in the Holy Land Jewish farm pioneers, in a relatively short time and working only six percent of the total land area, have, through their production, made notable contributions to the Allied cause. Whereas in World War I every bit of food and matériel had to be imported, this time the Jewish farmers of Palestine have raised 60 percent of the milk, eggs and vegetables required by that country, thus releasing to the United Nations a million tons of vital shipping.

Religious rural leaders, Protestant and Catholic, are today striving to bring back to America the biblical concept of man's relation to the soil. Protestant doctrine as promulgated by the Christian Rural Fellowship (November, 1943) teaches that "the soil is God's holy creation and man's moral relationship to it, his stewardship in its use and distribution is one of the fundamental messages of the rural church." The statement of principles adopted by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference (January, 1944) declares, "It is a sacred calling. In his work he [the farmer] is a partner of God. The land which he tills is a holy land. The soil has been committed to him as a sacred heritage." When we are told that a hundred million of America's acres have been "mined" to destruction and that another hundred million acres will, if methods are not changed, follow the same tragic route, the force and timeliness of these pronouncements become abundantly apparent. The inhabitants of this still fruitful country, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish, must return to the tenets laid down in Holy Writ, that the land belongs to God and that man is only its steward.

Landscape: Pasco, Wash.

Pasco—Main Street—sewer for Hanford *Hanford, Wash. greatest war project, construction, etc., in the U. S.*
no municipal street cleaning department—
dirty streets, drunks, ragged barefoot children in winter, winos, bums
winos *men drunk 24 hours a day on fortified wine every day* all over reeling
gamblers run the town, bums obscure it.

Cars, business, dentists, restaurants, beer halls—$26,000 this year $200 last year.
sputum & vomit & blood thick over the sidewalks.
Wind blowing dust from sagebrush desert without cessation
store windows filthy.

Great Columbia river off Main Street & parallel roaring high wide black & fabulous.
Navy planes of Pasco navy base drowning air.

Cars. Cars. Little Pasco depot. Arm bands, Dupont, on men at depot:
see anybody with suitcase, grab you, say—"Are you for Dupont? Are you for Dupont? Are you for Olympic Commissary?"—hustle you off . . . men out of Southern swamps—illiterates—hillbillies—poor white trash—
for Dupont—for Olympic—for Hanford—herd them herd them—into
Pasco Lunch, by depot, with niggers, for breakfast: used to give
them 75c breakfast. Couldn't get them out—they
went to sleep, legs on tables, wouldn't budge: most of them, foodless, moneyless, made the week trip across U. S. to
Pasco on promises: on $5 & promises of paradise
to come at Hanford. Get them out of
Pasco Lunch: now giving them only coffee & doughnuts. Get them out.

35,000 Mexicans coming in. Day & night, 50,000
beings in 5 sq. miles at Hanford, Dupont war project, crowd them in.
Pasco, coming in by train. Day & night. Knife in the back.

Pasco jail full emptied steady because feeding too big a problem.
Winos borrowing dollars living well: death, crime, squalor.

Pasco Main Street: sewer to Hanford, greatest war project in the U.S.A.

CAROL ELY HARPER.

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The Stage & Screen

Ballet International

HAVING acqu red the old Park Theater as a permanent stand, re-named it the "International" and considerably refurbished it, this new Ballet Company under the direction of George De Cuevas has opened for a six-week season and will, I understand, be offering a good number of new schemes. The house deserves some emphasis as it is apparent from the offset that the stage is not ideal, narrow and not deep; although the auditorium seemed well designed for sight, the company having invested in some system of dropped footlights. The program I attended included Swan Lake; a revival of William Dollar's Constantia, employing Chopin's First Piano Concerto; and the première of Edward Caton's Sebastian, set to music by Gian-Carlo Menotti. The orchestra throughout was conducted by Alexander Smallens. To particularize: I may say at once that without Danilova, there seems to me small excuse for staggering through the Petipa-Tschaikowsky piece at all. It is simply too silly, too long, too crowded with walk-ons rather than performers, too dependent upon an immediate and extended perfection (God in the house, *and* in the wings and pit—to paraphrase Bernhardt) to gain whole success. The *Pas de Quatre* is enchanting, of course, but as it can be and has been lifted out and used elsewhere, I think the piece might better be stored. Here, aside from the familiar excellencies of Eglevsky's dancing, it suffered from a number of uncertainties including the lighting which emerged white, strong, searching and enlarging; quite completely destructive to the desired miasmal forest view. As a matter of fact, the entire evening suffered from solid, unvarious, bright light—a circumstance even more detrimental to the dancers than to their traps. With a shallow stage whose distances must be consistently faked and angled, every inch of every figure was greatly perceptible, every corner of its scene. I think one would have to dance better than the books not to falter under such scrutiny: certainly light can perform better than this. The Chopin-Dollar offering was more felicitous, although I felt something of a strain between choreography and music and the colors struck by set and costumes seemed sadly luke. Mr. Dollar found opportunity during the first movement to build his kind of leaping action, but thereafter, the business smalled down to a series of tangled muscular pictures reminiscent of Balanchine where everyone bends the next leg and the floor rather than the air is in chief use. Marie-Jeanne, one of the company's ballerinas, here combined style and vitality, I thought. Closing the bill, Edward Caton's Sebastian (a stupid title, by the way) displayed perhaps the best overall miming in the work of Maslova, Patterson, Moncion. A story of love, jealousy and witchcraft in seventeenth century Venice, the work is pictorially brilliant with limitless rich, detailed, authentic carnival costumes by Milena traveling another ingenious Oliver Smith set. For

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some reason the Menotti music seemed full of weather (rain) to me, intermittently ascending to a hurricane which didn't arrive; but I suppose to have inserted even one period parasol among the other fascinating properties of intrigue of the piece would have been awkward, and Mr. Caton was probably right to have interpreted the crescendo emotionally, if, as I felt, at somewhat too great an acting length. I think this kind of intricate pageant show is very truly stuff for the ballet. If it is processional rather than winged, it is still beautiful; and its successful presentation is of great worth to a company. The carriage (no less than flight) of elaborate costumes and gear is not easy business. This young company accomplished it well. (*At the International.*)

Embezzled Heaven

IN A week peopled by great performers, it would be splendid to have found this adaptation of Franz Werfel's novel some sort of timber for the first lady; but unfortunately it is not, and one wonder why Miss Barrymore should so have chosen. Although it affords her numerous lines and an almost continual physical presence, the piece delivers her neither moments nor challenge as an actress, the part being one rather to battle than to build. It is always so difficult nowadays to read a Theatre Guild program, the evident interests of this organization being no longer centered upon plays written by playwrights, but upon arrangements fangled by innumerable people, all listed in gradually bolder type and ascending to the crucial credit: "Under the Personal Supervision of Theresa Helburn and Lawrence Langner." Here, L. Bush-Fekete and Mary Helen Fay (adaptors), B. Iden Payne (director) and Stewart Chaney (designer) have severally steadfastly worked to rear a character-drama from a character at once flat and unsympathetic. The story revolves around Teta, longtime cook in a baronial Czechoslovakian castle, who devotes her savings to the education of her nephew in the priesthood with the idea that she will be seen safe in heaven through his subsequent prayers. Upon discovery of the boy's duplicity, she journeys to Rome; accosts Pope Pius XI with her trouble; and receives assurance that the poor in spirit (and the contrite) shall indeed possess the kingdom. Needless to say, a character so singly dominated must demonstrate something like humor or pathos (conscious, unconscious) or must become involved in situations producing such emotions in order to be dramatic. However the play offers nothing but the one plane of determined and selfish piety, supported at the final curtain by some astonishing doctrine placed in the mouth of a Vatican official. It is all grievously slow, and while Mr. Payne, aided by his designer, has bravely invented a good bit of realistic kitchen business, and Albert Basserman manfully struggles to enlarge his jagged scene as the Pope to the dimensions of an entire act, the affair comes off as a demi-quaver. While I think I would pay tickets for the glimpse of Miss Barrymore fingering the zither in the first act, it is naturally distressing to watch her in so long, blunt and querulous a rôle; and she is considerably impeded by unnecessarily shrill acting on the part of Sanford Meisner and Madeline Lee. On the other hand, Bettina Cerf rounds out the stock skeleton of a Countess with skill, Eduard Franz rattles the adult Nephew into some sort of plausibility, Martin Blayne in a difficult subsidiary part performs with unusual sensibility, and Edward Fernandez, a little boy, plays the Little Boy with extreme care. All in all, honest work and dull theater. (*At the National.*)

Harvey

IT IS difficult to know whether to lay garlands or a vorpal sword before Brock Pemberton for having secured the most potentially delicious play of two seasons, secured actors capable of a unique performance, and then let the whole thing go through semi-written. I think I will settle for a wreath of roses—plus thorns—to crown his intelligence, since after all, the performance is there and it is unforgettable. But I think Mr. Pemberton and Mary Chase, the author, might have achieved posterity as well as box-office with another careful draft. Harvey is the name of a large busy Rabbit (white), companion to a gentle small-town alcoholic, who lives with his substantial sister and operates from the local bars. His niece, a gangling girl, wishing for some sort of social life, persuades her mother to enlist the help of the nearest psychoanalyst who, with his co-workers, successfully bolloxes everything, only to surrender in the end: the conflict being whether to allow Harvey and his hero to exist as they are; or whether, scientifically, to condemn them to separate realities. It seems important to me as reviewer not to examine too closely the means of the *dénouement;* but as critic, I find myself too truly regretful of the hilarious descent of this human comedy into satire (good), into farce (fair), into confusion (unfair) to be wholly discreet. Where Miss Chase has stumbled, it seems to me, is in allowing the appearance of this extra-curricular Rabbit to occur to other movers than the hero, offstage. Not that Harvey must ever be perceptible to the house (the delicate balance here is almost dangerously maintained throughout); but surely we should be present at the Rabbit's conversion of the Doctor in order fully to comprehend the possible parody of the subsequent scenes. This is a serious mistake, I feel, and one complicated by the author's wholesale wandering into exaggeration with her minor characters: a good bit of the motivation of the whole depends upon a sanitorium strong-man impossible of either imagination or fact. This kind of interlocking of farce with fantasy is always wrong, I think. It is a question of suddenly substituting *type* for *character* in order to speed *situation,* and is simply lazy writing. Whole plays can be built in this manner, but the method doesn't ever mix.

But unquestionably no amount of stingy analysis of the play can approximate the production as staged by Antoinette Perry, set by John Root, and principally played by Josephine Hull and Frank Fay. It is, of course, no hyperbole to speak of Miss Hull as the most beloved, round, beaming bundle of vagaries on the street. Here, with her hair *à la* Medusa, another of her sliding satin gowns, still another of her long-stringed handbags, she is

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adorable, funnier than ever. In the same vein, Frank Fay's portrayal of Elwood P. Dowd, the chosen of Harvey, is a personal triumph. Without once shifting his level affectionate daze, Mr. Fay's gestures, attitudes and quietness are perfect, and he cannot get on or off without prolonged cheers. As the writing of the supplementary characters becomes uncertain, so does the playing suffer, but Jane Van Duser is very good in the part of the Girl, Tom Seidel delivers his neatest job as a young Medic, and exactly as loud and pugnacious as he was planned, Jesse White's Attendant is accurate. An affair which is certain to attract all of the profession as well as the public, my final advice is: when you can get in, go! (*At the Forty-Eighth Street.*)

Sleep My Pretty One

ALMOST entirely unfamiliar with the work of Pauline Lord, I don't think it fair or possible to devote space to her interpretation of a wicked old wheelchair-ridden woman in this grim Gramercy Park abortive melodrama. The play, exposing the machinations of a wealthy mother devoted to dispatching the various fiancées of her weakling (as usual, Harry Ellerbe) son, is foolish; and the actress's habit of speaking exactly three words to a breath did not help. There is one live scene played by Julie Stevens and Don Gibson as a couple of normal young people, and Norma Chambers certainly wrestled with perhaps the most embarrassing part ever handed an actress; but these efforts plus Roy Hargrave's direction and two Raymond Sovey sets were entirely lost. (*At the Playhouse.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Depends on Your Mood

HEREWITH are some notes about recent films that will not be covered at length because of space limitations. These remarks, however, may help you to decide if any of the following movies should be on your list of things to be done today.

"And Now Tomorrow" belongs to that group of movies best described as filmed novels. Competently made, they are frequently very interesting, but contribute little to the field of cinema. In this movie version of Rachel Field's book, Irving Pichel has directed his cast well, Fred Kohlmar has given the whole a good production, but the result is without motion picture values. Slow pace and lack of movement make it more literary than cinematic. "And Now Tomorrow" has, however, one point of distinction: its heroine is stone deaf. This rôle is played by beautiful Loretta Young in the most sensitive performance of her career. The story concerns the love of two very wealthy sisters for the same man, and the gradual change in the deaf sister who becomes aware of her responsibilities toward society through the interests of the doctor trying to cure her ailment. In portraying this doctor from the wrong side of the tracks, Alan Ladd contributes little more to the story's visualization than his own personal magnetism. And the other players, except for Helen Mack as the mother of a child operated on by the doctor, are not likely to win Oscars. The script is no doubt to blame, but Susan Hayward makes the other sister so selfishly mean, and Barry Sullivan makes the fiancé so colorlessly weak, that neither carries conviction in their performances. However, the handling of the problems of deafness and Miss Young's understanding of a person whose entire life is limited by these problems give this picture an unusual appeal.

"Irish Eyes Are Smiling" continues Twentieth Century-Fox's musical biographies. This time it's Songwriter Ernest R. Ball whose ups and downs are brightened by technicolor—mostly up, for once Ernie gets started with "Let the Rest of the World Go By," his songs seem to captivate all listeners. Of course this was some thirty years ago when a sentimental ballad made even tough characters cry into their beer. Ernie's love life doesn't go as smoothly as his songs, and much of the film's footage is taken up with his pursuit of a stubborn Irish lass (played by June Haver). The formula, however, is a little more sprightly than usual, mainly because of Director Gregory Ratoff's good pacing and the production of Damon Runyon who likes sentiment but knows how to mix it with a hard boiled note. Then too, Monty Woolley hisses his usual sardonic remarks through his beard, remarks which are flavored by Runyon and manage to offset any of the plot's or songs' drooling. Another asset is Dick Haymes who plays Ernie as a manly composer who sings his own songs well. To enjoy this picture, you'll have to feel kindly toward the Irish because Ball wrote "Mother Machree," "A Little Bit of Heaven," "Boy of Mine" and many others including the title song; and they're all there with appropriate production numbers.

"The Conspirators"—Any one movie can have only so many suspicious characters, so many spies wearing dark glasses and spying in gloomy streets, so many conspirators conspiring in secret meeting places, swank hotels and glittering gambling casinos. This film has too many. It is just as if Warner Brothers, who make the best examples of this type of picture, were trying to outdo themselves. The leads are played by Paul Henreid and Hedy Lamarr (who is beautiful but shouldn't wear such gorgeous evening clothes or white dresses on a dark night when she's on the job for the underground). Included in the cast are such masters of the intrigue and sinister as Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre, Victor Francen, Joseph Calleia. The script, based on Frederic Prokosch's novel, means well even if it is talky and pretentious; and Jean Negulesco's direction, though on the static side, manages to work up some good suspense at times. I wish the whole piece, even the Lisbon setting, didn't have quite such an air of being a parody on former spy-and-intrigue films.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE THEATRE GUILD presents
ETHEL BARRYMORE in
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NATIONAL THEATRE, 41st West of Broadway
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Children's Books—1944

MY IMPRESSION is that the war has had a notable effect upon the children's books published this year. There seem to be fewer of them, although full statistics are not yet available and a number of titles may come out between now and Christmas to swell the grand total. Moreover, with a number of striking exceptions, the quality of this year's books, purely on the physical side, seems lower. Doubtless labor shortages, paper shortages, the difficulty in securing printers and binders, account for this. Nor should it deter purchasers. For the comparison I am making is with the exceedingly high standards which prevailed in this country before the war. Children's books are still, as a class, the best looking and most attractive of any issued by American publishers.

Naturally, too, the war itself is reflected in the subject matter authors have chosen for this year's stories. I am inclined to think that this is a mistake, for it will make a number of books utterly uninteresting the minute the war is over. And it seems to me that young people hear quite enough about the conflict at home and in school and over the radio. Good biographies for younger readers continue to appear in considerable quantity. One of them, which I do not list below, is a life of Garibaldi. It is well written. Unfortunately the subject is one which inevitably involves the Papacy and the Church in the nineteenth century, and the author, whose sympathies are entirely with the Italian patriot, minces no words in her criticism of Pio Nono. It seems doubtful to me that Catholics would want their children to learn about this controversy until they had reached a certain maturity. (Garibaldi, Nina Brown Baker, Vanguard, $2.50) I omit another attractive book for much the same kind of reason. This is "Chancho—a Boy and His Pig in Peru" (Sutherland Stark, Messner, $2.00). The story related has a great deal of charm, but unfortunately it contains a long description of a religious procession honoring the "Lord of the Earthquakes." I simply do not know whether such a procession takes place in Peru, nor is there anything explicitly wrong in the concept. But it comes very close to paganism, and it would seem to me not particularly suited to young and unformed minds.

This year I have not singled out any group of books and placed them in a separate box of specially recommended titles.

Older children begin to form their own tastes, and those who are buying presents for them should be aware of these tastes and should be governed thereby. I have also somewhat simplified the categories into which the books are divided. It is very hard to base these upon ages, since children vary so much in their intellectual development. But speaking generally, each list begins with books for younger readers and ends with books for slightly older readers.

Specifically religious juveniles have appeared during the season, but none of them particularly attract me. Miss Mary Fabyan Windeatt has written two for The Grail (St. Meinrad, Ind.). These are "Little Queen" and "My Name Is Thomas" (Aquinas). The former sells for $2.00 and the latter for $1.00. Like everything Miss Windeatt does, the books are competent, but I don't like the illustrations, and I did not find the stories at all moving. Marigold Hunt has attempted what is always an impossibly difficult task in "A Life of Our Lord for Children." The text is as good as such things ever are. The illustrations (by Eleanor O. Edie) I find distressingly saccharine. The book is published by Sheed and Ward ($1.75). I have never understood why it is not much better to read the Gospels themselves aloud, with what explanation may be necessary supplied by the parent. Last year Mary Alice Jones wrote "Tell Me About God," which attempted another and even more impossible task—that of discussing the Deity in such a way as not to offend any Christian. The result was God with theology left out. This year the same author has produced "Tell Me About Jesus," with much the same result. You are never quite sure whether Our Lord is merely a perfect man or is also the Son of God. But at least the book cannot offend in any positive sense. (Illustrated by Pelagie Doane, Rand McNally, $2.00).

To be looked at by, or read to, the very young

All of the books listed here are most attractively illustrated; they are among the best bargains of this year's crop.

SURPRISE PACKAGE. Walt Disney. S. & S. $1.50. This and the next two are "Giant Golden Books." Included are stories by Andersen, Joel Chandler Harris, Lewis Carroll, Kenneth Grahame, James M. Barrie. Almost all of them are abridged, which I do not like. Disney's art I begin to find tedious; when he begins to illustrate "Alice In Wonderland," he cannot forget Tenniel, and yet he is nothing like as good as Tenniel.

ANIMAL STORIES. Georges Duplaix with pictures by Rojankovsky. S. & S. $1.50. The text of this volume is only moderately good; the drawings are very pleasant and plentiful. A good bargain for youngsters.

TENGGREN'S STORY BOOK. Selected and illustrated by Gustaf Tenggren. S. & S. $1.50. The stories: Rip Van Winkle,

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Robin Hood, Tom Sawyer, Treasure Island, etc. They are abridged. The illustrations are fine.

THE SECOND CLIMBING BOOK. Charlotte Steiner and Mary Burlingham. Vanguard. $1.00. This little volume, like its last year's predecessor, unfolds and is read from the bottom to the top, over the top and down again.

BUCKY BEAR (Who Would Not Take His Nap). Elaine Wayne and Leonard Weisgard. Lothrop. $1.00. The sub-title makes perfectly clear the moral this little volume attempts to inculcate.

RED LIGHT-GREEN LIGHT. Golden MacDonald and Leonard Weisgard. Doubleday. $2.00. A very simple treatment of the notion of stopping and going. Probably useful for city children who will have to cross the streets unaccompanied. Illustrations particularly good.

HORSES. Timothy Hay and Wag. Harper. $1.50. A mother horse and her young colt go to the circus, where they see a lot of interesting sights and learn a lot of miscellaneous information, such as that an elephant eats a bale of hay a day.

PRETZEL. Margaret Rey and H. A. Rey. Harper. $1.75. A dachshund romance, in which the suitor finally proves the worth of his abnormally long body.

NOW DADDY'S IN THE ARMY. D. Carr and I. J. Parrott, illustrated by George Shellhase. Morrow. $1.00. Intended to give an elementary picture of what basic training is like.

PETER "PT." Polly Culbertson and Annette Byrne. McKay. $.50. The adventures of a PT boat in the American Navy.

POGO'S TRAIN RIDE. Jo and Ernest Norling. Holt. $1.25. A very simple account of railroading.

I LIKE TRAINS. Catherine Woolley and Doris Spiegel. Harper. $1.00. An even less technical account of railroads.

BARNABY AND MR. O'MALLEY. Crockett Johnson. Holt. $2.00. This comic strip appeals to readers of all ages, though it is a rather special taste. Some like it and some do not.

From five to ten

Readers should remember that the following books are roughly listed in the order of the ages of their prospective readers.

PANDORA. Clare Turley Newberry. Harper. $1.75. The 1944 contribution to a classic series of cat books; I believe no one living can draw a cat with the skill of Miss Newberry.

JENNY—THE BUS THAT NOBODY LOVED. Maurice Dolbier and Tibor Gergely. Random. $1.25. The adventures of a personified and decrepit auto-bus.

THE FRIENDLY ANIMALS. Louis Slobodkin. Vanguard. $1.50. A book with a moral. Be kind to animals and they will be kind to you.

DADDY COMES HOME. Charlotte Steiner. Doubleday. $1.25. Daddy is simply away—not away at the war—and he simply comes home.

THE ADVENTURE OF JACK NINEPINS. Esther Averill. Harper. $1.75. A ninepin, animated into life, travels from New York to Paris, much of it floating under his own buoyancy.

EGBERT AND HIS MARVELOUS ADVENTURES. Paul T. Gilbert and H. A. Rey. Harper. $1.50. Egbert is a little boy who has strange encounters with a great miscellany of creatures, from a seal to a white elephant.

ON THE GREEN MEADOWS. Thornton W. Burgess. Little. $1.75. The usual line from Mr. Burgess's pen and drawing board —rabbits, squirrels, etc.

THE BULLFIGHTER'S SON. Martha Cristina Chambers and Ignacio P. Ortega. Oxford. $1.75. A heavy flavor of old Spain, without politics.

THE MAGIC MONKEY. Plato and Christina Chan. Whittlesey. $1.50. An adaptation of an old Chinese legend written and illustrated by two very talented young Chinese.

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THAT SILVER FOX PATROL

By Neil Boyton, S.J. Troop Chaplain as well as popular author, Neil Boyton, S.J., writes of his boys with assurance and humor, giving an authentic picture of the friendly, healthy, absorbing life in the Scout. world. *Decorations by Robb Beebe. Ages* 9-14. $2.00

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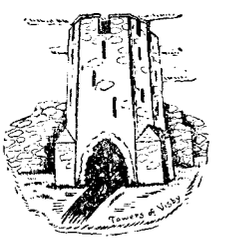

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Delayed Message

IT IS the old question of being in the subway and seated, perhaps, next to a murderer. How does one recognize a murderer? There are all these books, paintings—all the orchestras play on all the radios. There is a young American composer with a name that sounds like that of Robert Schumann (1810-1851); will his music be played in a hundred years? This month Chagall shows his paintings in New York. In a hundred years, in two hundred years, will they be in the greatest art galleries of the greatest capitals of the world? This writer feels certain that some of them will be admired as long as any painting is admired. But which ones? And why, and by what proof? There is "Gone with the Wind" and why are we so certain that it will not be classed eventually with "War and Peace" as the record of another war, another society? We pick and choose among our contemporaries, and sometimes perhaps we think we know what is good and what is bad, but Henri Peyre's book shows convincingly that the chances of our being right are extremely small. For in the past the majority of critics have never been right. Boileau was pretty nearly always right, but not always right. The critics have always been right about the painting, the writing, the music, afterward when what they judge is safely in the past. That is to say they are right because

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we agree with them about the works of the past. But when the works of the past were the works of the present, and were judged by the critics of the times, the critics were amazingly wrong.

Mr. Peyre's selections from their perpetually repeated errors are of course highly entertaining. These quotations are all through his book and they make it amusing to read. It appears that every single writer in England, in France and in America, who later became required reading in the classics, was greeted when he wrote as bestial, immoral, ignorant, decadent, and was abused, ignored or scolded. It appears that creative art, which has never failed our civilization, has never been recognized when in the action of creation. It was always wonderful—afterward. It was wonderful to the professors and to the public. But none of the great men were wonderful when they were writing, painting or composing.

It is not just funny; there is a certain danger and a certain loss. First of all, some of these men were so discouraged by adverse criticism that they produced less than they might have, or differently, or ceased entirely to produce. But that is not the worst since after all so much has been done that is wonderful that no living man can read or enjoy it all. What seems more regrettable is that the contemporaries of the great artists have been systematically advised by critics not to read and not to enjoy them. So that whatever message the great artists desired to convey never reached anyone until circumstances had greatly changed. They sent a telegram to someone and it only reached his children or his grandchildren. By then there would have been a war or something.

This is a very important book to read because someone may be saying something to us now that we ought to know about while there is still time for us to do something about it, and anyone who reads Mr. Peyre will have a better chance of hearing what is important to hear.

What of the Dry?

A. J. CRONIN has provided heaping portions of two of the leading elements of his highly successful writing technique in "The Green Years." One is his narrative skill. He unfolds his simple tale with the greatest apparent ease. The story gets under way on the very first page, effortlessly picks up speed and with unflagging momentum continues on to a comparatively happy ending. It gives the impression that Dr. Cronin could have gone on and on—as perhaps he will—for there is no particular reason for stopping when he does except that for the moment things look brighter for his hero, Robert Shannon. Dr. Cronin's effortless style makes for effortless reading and must have a lot to do with his extensive popularity over here. There is something of the Russian art of telling a story in all that he writes.

The other element is an almost inevitable tendency to stack the cards against his hero—object: pity. Consider what Robert has to face. He loses both his father and his mother within the space of a few months while he is still a little boy. He has to leave his native Ireland for his grandparents' home in Scotland. On his first day at school he becomes the butt of ridicule of both teacher and pupils because of a made-over green suit which his grandmother had forced upon him.

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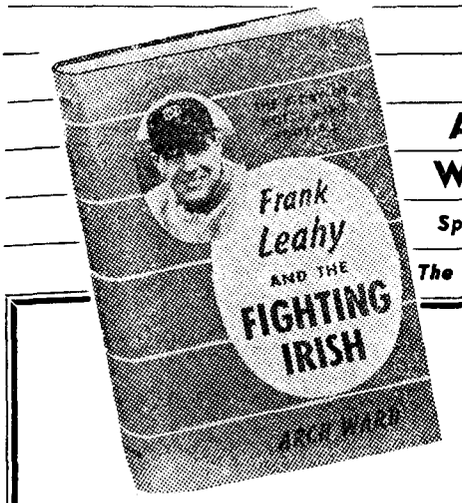
The list of Robert's miseries has only begun. The one person who takes to him in the first agonizing days of his readjustment to a new and unfriendly environment is his braggart great grandfather. The two finally become great chums. Yet even here Robert is riding for a fall, for the discovery that his protector is an old lecher is suddenly, unmistakably thrust upon him in agonizing fashion. Then there is Gavin, his best friend and contemporary, who provides the most satisfying companionship only to be killed before his very eyes by an oncoming freight train. Or Alison, his first and deepest love, who never returns his affection. At the crucial moment when Robert threatens to achieve a resounding success and for the first time establish his future by winning the scholarship plum for his district, he comes down with diphtheria when he is leading the field by a wide margin and has only one day more of examinations to go. It is difficult to believe that Oliver Twist had a harder time of it, and indeed Oliver is very much Robert's counterpart. There are also minor resemblances here to the more cheerful "How Green Was My Valley." The fact that Robert has to struggle so hard to hold on to the faith in which he was baptized is (the way it is presented) only one more trial, but it will give added zest to the story for religious-minded readers. "The Green Years" will touch many a generous American heart.

"Park Bench Statesman"

PROBABLY it is impossible to write a satisfactory biography of anyone as important as Bernard Baruch during the man's lifetime. There are somethings the biographer cannot know and there are other things he will not say—things dependent upon his own attitudes and point of view. Mr. Field is a great admirer of Mr. Baruch, as are scores and thousands of other Americans. Indeed no prominent "elder statesman" has so few enemies as this great Wall Street manipulator turned public servant. He has always commanded the respect of Congress and the Executive alike, without regard to party lines. He himself has always been a staunch Democrat.

Neither from Mr. Field's book nor from the public record can we make any appraisal of Mr. Baruch's business career. He never has welcomed publicity about it. Certainly his operations—or many of them—were characterized by a certain ruthlessness. Thus he did not hesitate to do some very profitable short-selling at the time of the notorious peace rumors of 1916. He exonerated himself completely of any suspicion of having made use of the inside information his friendship with President Wilson might have made available to him. But the minute the papers began to play up peace talk, he took a strnog short position and apparently enriched himself greatly thereby.

But as a public servant and as a man one is forced to give unqualified admiration to Bernard Baruch. Never has there been the least hint that he took advantage of his position to further himself or his friends. Never has there been the least reflection on his personal integrity. And to these positive qualities of character must be added an insight and a wise shrewdness which have been of inestimable value to his country and indeed to the world. To get some idea of the truth of these statements, one could do far worse than read Mr. Field's journalistic biography which is most vividly and most interestingly put together.



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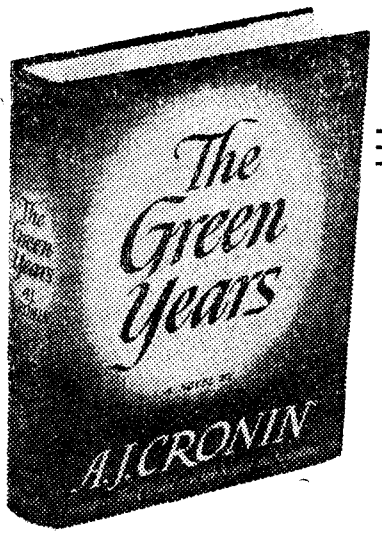

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More Books of the Week

John C. Calhoun—Nationalist, 1782-1828. Charles M. Wiltse. Bobbs. $3.75.

JOHN CALHOUN is one of those men who are the very roots of America. You cannot isolate any one of such men from the others. No matter how divergent, they are all part of the same pattern. One can understand them only if one is physically or spiritually part of them. To our average modern American they are museum pieces, unrelated to our modern life, and that is a dangerously mistaken view. Those of us who still are knowingly part of the pattern, realized in 1753 the emergence of a new phenomenon in the world: the British Empire, and that we were the most important portion of it. "Our imperial foundations lie in America, no longer in England," said Benjamin Franklin. Our political growing pains began then, and are fortunately not yet healed by political maturity. In those years we thought in two ways about how best to organize *our* Empire, "the greatest of all time." We were thinking of the nature of our union; socially, in terms of privilege—or of social equality; politically, in terms of government. That bitter cleavage in our thought split families, for we had no classes. Some of us seceded from the Empire because *our* King was a German, a member of the House of Hanover and of that family who were Hereditary Electors of the Empire; a king could understand this new empire of ours only as ruled from a center in the German way which, in Europe, had superseded the original idea of the Holy Roman Empire. Some of us were thinking, though nebulously, of that still newer thing called eventually a commonwealth of nations. The roots of this British organism are purely American. Calhoun had traces of it in his thought, war hawk or not. Our modern American should understand that it is still the same problem of political and social union extended from the nation to the world. It is all there in our federal union of sovereign states. The problem was not solved by our Constitution. A constitution is only a guide. Crystallizing in 1763, our divergence clashed portentously; successfully, once in 1776. Unsuccessfully, in 1865. Ominously, more than ever, in 1944.

Calhoun was a vital part of all that. He was one of the three typical, essentially American figures of their day: Calhoun, nationalist turning to secession; Daniel Webster, secessionist, becoming the protagonist of the unitary national republic idea; Henry Clay, "the great compromiser" because he understood both ideas, attempting to hold both together: these two fiercely conflicting ideas of the nature of society and the union with secession or violent bloodshed. With this continuity in mind, Calhoun's biography is the best yet written. It is clear, convincing, attractively written. It spreads before you the living problem of our nation's early youth. Actually its problem is contemporaneous to ourselves, for our present day Republican Party (not Calhoun's republican party) long wedded to the national Republic, is turning to States' Rights; while our Democratic Party, incoherently based on our original American preference for a permanent, harmonious, federated League of North American Nations, has, in its newest phase of the New Deal, gone all out for the closely integrated, authoritarian, German idea.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

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The Dream of Philip II. Edgar Maass. Bobbs-Merrill. $3.50.

ONE of the great El Greco's pictures represents King Philip II kneeling at the side of his father, Emperor Charles V, and looking into the open heavens, where the Church Triumphant awaits the faithful monarch. This picture is called "The Dream of Philip II." No doubt in adopting this title for his biography of the Spanish King the author sought to give Philip II his proper place in a great mural. But Greco was a believer in the apotheosis of which the King dreamed, and he put him into a stable metaphysical world; poor little Mr. Maass, skeptical and spoiled by the historical relativism and the psychoanalysis of our time, puts his hero in the climate of his tumultous time. Thus the author's mural is like the stage setting of a melodrama while Greco's is deep and sets mortal man against the background of the Eternal.

It is interesting that Philip II's counterrevolution appeals so much to the authors of our revolutionary age. A decade ago Reinhold Schneider, another German-born author, published a study on Philip II called "Religion and Might"—a profound analysis of the Spanish religious restoration. Mr. Maass adopts much of Schneider's analysis, but remains peripheric; he makes some clever remarks, he presents some colorful fictionized details—hasty and glittering like a movie. But this is not a novel, only a history book with some fiction sprinkled on. The unprepared reader does not know where history ends and the author's imagination begins. Books of this kind, a fifth poetry and four fifths non-fiction, are an abomination for the serious student of history.

MAX FISCHER.

The Concept of Dread. Soren Kierkegaard. Trans. by Walter Lowrie. Princeton. $2.00.

WALTER LOWRIE and his publishers are to be congratulated for having given the English-speaking world a full Kierkegaard in such a short time and in such an excellent version. The translator admits that this volume was the most tormenting one to translate. Anybody with a slight idea of Kierkegaard's tortuous way of thought and his "vile, slovenly style, his clumsy, unnecessary terminology" can appreciate the merit of the translator who has given us a Kierkegaard as readable and elegant as possible. For the sake of completeness this book had to be translated, and if any COMMONWEAL readers are already familiar with post-Hegelian Protestant theology, they will have to read it. They will hear the faint rumblings of the approaching dialectical theology of Karl Barth and the first ripples of such approaching philosophical disasters as Heidegger. It is, of course, unorthodox, abstruse, weirdly profound and alarmingly searching. If you speak Hegelian it also will help you to finish Hegel. But for men schooled in the lucid clarity of scholastic distinctions it will require more than the average seminary education to find out from the author what his message is. Maybe they have a good answer for the great S. K.'s blast against the traditional doctrine of the equation of the first and original sin.

May I ask the translator for a good reason why he has not given us, and refuses to give us, a good translation of the book on Dr. Adler? Surely the reason that S. K. never published it cannot suffice to withhold it from us more than thirty years after Theodor Haecker made an excellent German translation.

H. A. REINHOLD.

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The Month of the Poor Souls

November brings to mind once more the most salutary thought, to pray for the poor souls in Purgatory. November, with its dull skies and drifting leaves, is the best month of the year for this commemoration. We are sure, with the assurance of faith, that our prayers can help those poor spirits, "confined to waste in fires, until the foul crimes, done in their days on earth, are burnt and purged away"!

It is an ancient and pious practice among our Catholic people to make offerings for the poor souls in aid of charity. We shall be glad to be almoners for all our friends who wish to make offerings in aid of the poor souls.

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The Inner Forum

Festival at Assisi

THE *Catholic Herald* of London reports that the four-day religious festival honoring Saint Francis of Assisi, patron of Italy, at Assisi this year, attracted a number of American, British and other Allied troops. It took place the first four days of October, ending on the feast day of the world-renowned founder of the Franciscan Order. Allied military authorities cooperated by relaxing the curfew and other regulations that would interfere with the observance of these four days.

One of the features of this year's festival was a public performance of three Lauds by Fra Jacopone da Todi and Saint Francis for the first time in seven hundred years. These plays, which were given in the open air in the precincts of the Basilica, were produced and adapted by Ferdinando Tamberlani who with his wife Helena Wnorowka, a Polish actress, took leading parts. Signor Tamberlani told the *Herald* correspondent "that he was glad that this first public showing for so many centuries was being given to an audience composed of almost all of the free peoples of the world, particularly those who are fighting for the freedom to practice the Christian way of life that Saint Francis taught."

During the course of the festival a number of Allied service men and women took advantage of the opportunity to visit some of the shrines at Assisi. Among these is the refectory of the ancient Convent still preserved in its original simple form; there Saint Clare's place at table is marked by a simple bowl of flowers which are changed daily. The Friars distributed among the British and American troops little pieces of flowers and fern to send home from the tiny garden of Saint Clare, where Francis is said to have composed his great Canticle of the creatures. British Army Education prepared a short mimeographed biography of the Poverello and guide to the town of Assisi for distribution to British troops. It will also issue a more complete guide in pamphlet form which is being prepared by the British Catholic Women's League.

This four-day festival was also an expression of thanksgiving on the part of the Italians that Assisi had been liberated and that its shrines and monuments had come through the war in a good state of preservation. The pilgrims attending came from all over the world.

CONTRIBUTORS

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